Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts
Announces
HERSHEY FELDER: BEETHOVEN
Live from Florence, Italy

A One-Time-Only Live Streamed Broadcast Musical Event
to Benefit The Wallis
on
Sunday, July 12, 2020, 5 pm (PDT)

(Beverly Hills, CA, June 18, 2020) The Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts announces HERSHEY FELDER: BEETHOVEN, a one-time-only, live streamed broadcast musical event presented live from Florence, Italy, to benefit The Wallis, on Sunday, July 12, 2020, at 5 pm (PDT). Hershey Felder: Beethoven features the music of Ludwig van Beethoven, text by Felder, and is based on the original stage play direction by Joel Zwick. Felder, an actor, playwright and pianist, is internationally acclaimed for his productions about the lives of such composers as Debussy, Tchaikovsky, Gershwin, Berlin, Chopin, and Bernstein.

Hershey Felder: Beethoven is based on Memories of Beethoven: Out of the House of Black-Robed Spaniards, a first-hand account by Dr. Gerhard von Breuning. (‘Schwarzspanierhaus,’ or House of Black-Robed Spaniards, was the name of Beethoven’s final residence in Vienna, Austria, where he died in 1827). Felder brings Beethoven to life through the eyes of Viennese doctor Breuning, who spent his boyhood by the aging Maestro’s side.

The one-man musical play features some of the composer’s most well-known compositions from his keyboard works such as the “Emperor Concerto” to the 5th and 9th Symphonies, his keyboard sonatas, and chamber music selections. Hershey Felder: Beethoven is produced by Samantha F. Voxakis, Karen Racanelli and Erik Carstensen.

Critically lauded in its world premiere at TheaterWorks Silicon Valley in 2017, the San Jose Mercury News called Hershey Felder: Beethoven a “towering performance about a towering composer.” Significantly, BroadwayWorld reported that Hershey Felder: Beethoven shattered box office records at TheatreWorks, establishing a new record for the 48-year-old company, which has since been
maintained. Following the world premiere, the production was the highest grossing production at the Wallis Annenberg in Los Angeles, The Laguna Playhouse and the Leo K. Theatre at Seattle Repertory Theatre, and broke records at the San Diego Rep (the highest grossing production in its 40-year history). Felder attributes this success to the tremendous popularity of the world’s greatest composer.

Following the success of Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin: Live from Florence, a live streaming event in May from Felder’s residence in Florence, Italy, which raised significant funds for 13 US theatres and arts organizations, Felder has created a new arts broadcasting company, Hershey Felder Presents – Live from Florence. The collaboration unites Felder with Florentine cinema group Montagni Audiovisivi, the internationally recognized English language magazine The Florentine, and American broadcaster Rich Flier, to produce high quality streaming arts programming for international audiences, both for the period while theatres remain closed during the Covid-19 pandemic, and beyond.

Director Joel Zwick has previously collaborated with Felder on George Gershwin Alone, Monsieur Chopin and Maestro Bernstein. Zwick is recognized as one of Hollywood’s most prolific directors of episodic television and has directed on Broadway, Off-Broadway and for Broadway touring companies as well as directing the highest-grossing film comedy of all time My Big Fat Greek Wedding.

Associate Director is Trevor Hay. Scenic design is by Hershey Felder. Costume design is from Theatr’ Hall, Paris. Film production is by Montagni Audiovisivi. Live editing is by Stefano DeCarli. Live broadcast by Rich Flier. Sound design and production are by co-Producer Erik Carstensen.

In keeping with Hershey Felder’s "ENCORE" tradition and audience engagement, Hershey Felder Presents has established THE HERSHEY FELDER PRESENTS ARTS PRIZE COMPETITION* which will be presented as the ENCORE of the Beethoven Performance. Ticket-holders will be invited to cast one vote for their favorite Competition Video using their registered email address, and the competition winner by viewer vote will be awarded $25,000 (twenty-five thousand U.S. dollars). For more information please visit HersheyFelder.net

*NO REGISTRATION FEE OR PURCHASE NECESSARY TO ENTER COMPETITION. PARENTAL CONSENT REQUIRED FOR ANYONE UNDER 19. Registration ends 7/6/20. Submissions must be uploaded by 7/7/20, subject to live "Voting Period" on 7/12/20. Open to U.S. legal residents who are 13 years of age or older at time of entry. Subject to full Official Rules available at hersheyfelder.net/contest-page. Void where prohibited or restricted by law.

HERSHEY FELDER, an actor, pianist, writer, director, composer, conductor and producer, and named to Time Magazine’s 2016 Top 10 Plays and Musicals, has played over 6,000 performances of his self-created solo productions at some of the world’s most prestigious theatres and has broken box office records consistently. American Theatre Magazine has said, “Hershey Felder is in a category all his own.” His shows include: George Gershwin Alone (Broadway’s Helen Hayes Theatre, West End’s Duchess Theatre); Monsieur Chopin; Beethoven; Maestro (Leonard Bernstein); Franz Liszt in Musik, Lincoln: An American Story, Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin, Our Great Tchaikovsky, and A Paris Love Story. His compositions and recordings include Aliyah, Concerto for Piano and Orchestra; Fairytale, a musical; Les Anges de Paris, Suite for Violin and Piano; Song Settings; Saltimbanques for Piano and Orchestra; Etudes Thematiques for Piano; and An American Story for Actor and Orchestra. Hershey is the adaptor, director and designer for the internationally performed play-with-music The Pianist of Willesden Lane with Steinway artist Mona Golabek; producer and designer for the musical Louis and Keely: ‘Live’ at the Sahara, directed by Taylor Hackford; and writer and director for Flying Solo, featuring opera legend Nathan Gunn. Upcoming projects include Anna and Sergei, a new play featuring the music of Sergei Rachmaninoff, as well as a new musical based on the award-winning book Out on a Ledge by Eva Libitzky. Hershey has operated a full-service production company since 2001. He has been a scholar-in-residence at Harvard University’s Department of Music and is married to Kim Campbell, the first female Prime Minister of Canada.
Tickets are $55.00 per household for viewing on Smart TV, computer, smartphone or tablet. Patrons will receive a link and password which will enable them to view the live stream. Purchase includes the live stream AND an additional 72-hours of on-demand viewing access to a video recording of the live stream (available for one hour after the broadcast ends). Tickets may be purchased by visiting TheWallis.org/Beethoven or by calling 310.746.4000 (Tuesday – Friday, 9:30 am – 2:30 pm).

**About the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts:**
The Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts is a dynamic cultural hub and community resource where local, national and international artists share their artistry with ever-expanding audiences. The campus, located in the heart of Beverly Hills, CA, is committed to robust and distinctive presentations and education programs curated with both creativity and social impact in mind. Distinguished by its eclectic programming that mirrors the diverse landscape of Los Angeles and its location in the entertainment capital of the world, The Wallis has produced and presented more than 275 dance, theater, opera, classical music, cinema and family programs since its doors opened in October 2013. Hailed as “au courant” (Lala Magazine), The Wallis was lauded by Culture Vulture, which proclaims, “If you love expecting the unexpected in the performing arts, you have to love The Wallis.” Its programming has been nominated for 57 Ovation Awards and seven L.A. Drama Critic's Circle Awards. The campus itself, a breathtaking 70,000-square-foot facility, celebrating the classic and the modern, has garnered six architectural awards. Designed by acclaimed architect Zoltan E. Pali (SPF:architects), the restored building features the original 1933 Beverly Hills Post Office (on the National Register of Historic Places), which serves as the theater’s dramatic yet welcoming lobby, and includes the contemporary 500-seat, state-of-the-art Bram Goldsmith Theater; the 150-seat Lovelace Studio Theater; an inviting open-air plaza for family, community and other performances; and GroW @ The Wallis: A Space for Arts Education, where learning opportunities for all ages and backgrounds abound. Together, these elements embrace the city’s history and its future, creating a performing arts destination for L.A.-area visitors and residents alike. The Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts is led by Chairman of the Board Michael Nemeroff, Executive Director & Chief Executive Officer Rachel Fine and Artistic Director Paul Crewes.

For more information about The Wallis, please visit: TheWallis.org. Like The Wallis on Facebook, and follow us on Twitter and Instagram.

**EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:**

**WHAT:**
HERSHEY FELDER: BEETHOVEN
*Live from Florence, Italy*
Music by Ludwig van Beethoven
Written by Hershey Felder
Directed by Joel Zwick

**WHEN:**
Sunday, July 12, 2020, 5 pm (PDT)

**RUN TIME:**
The show, which runs one hour and 45 minutes, is followed by The Hershey Felder Presents Arts Prize Competition.

**TICKET PRICES AND INFORMATION:**
$55.00 per household for viewing on Smart TV, computer, smartphone or tablet.
Patrons will receive a link and password which will enable them to view the live stream. Purchase includes the live stream AND an additional 72-hours of on-demand viewing access to a video recording of the live stream (available for one hour after the broadcast ends).
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